

**Protocol for Military Clearance**  
**U.S. Department of Agriculture**  
**Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service**  
**18 June 2001**

**I. Introduction**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) oversees the entry of cargo, personnel, equipment, personal property, mail, and their means of conveyance into the United States. USDA may issue civil penalties for noncompliance with agricultural laws.

**II. Purpose of Protocol**

To prevent the introduction or dissemination of exotic plant pests and animal disease agents into the United States by establishing and implementing guidelines, regulations, and policies that mitigate risks associated with military movement of troops, vehicles, equipment, and vessels of conveyance. Also, provide guidance to standardize activities carried out by APHIS personnel or its designees (military cooperators) in support of the APHIS mission.

**III. Scope**

U.S. military forces are deployed throughout the world. Associated with the movement of troops are risks of introduction of exotic agricultural pests and animal disease agents through soil contamination and transporting regulated items such as fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy products, other food items, and animal products (e.g., trophies).

Precautionary measures to prevent introduction and dissemination include inspection of equipment, vehicles, means of conveyance, personnel, personal effects, and cargo. If, upon inspection, restricted and/or prohibited materials are found, action will be taken to mitigate risk. The actions vary according to pest and/or animal disease risk.

Military preclearance expedites the movement for troops while mitigating risk. In the European Command, the U.S. military has a cadre of trained and experienced military personnel that carry out preclearance activities in support of the APHIS mission. USDA provides oversight with a USDA/APHIS Advisor on site.

**All large scale military activities require prior notification to APHIS (See Section VII).** For small scale operations, if the military is unable to conduct cleaning overseas, the USDA/APHIS Port Director at the first port-of-entry must be notified at least 7 days in advance and will determine if appropriate cleaning facilities are available. All items will be held at the first U.S. port of entry for inspection. In the absence of approved cleaning facilities, the equipment will be refused entry. If the equipment is contaminated to an extent that prevents its cleaning, then it will also be refused entry.

#### IV. Military Equipment

All military rolling stock (i.e., humvees, trucks, weapons systems, tanks, etc.) and other used military gear (canvas tents and pegs) must be thoroughly cleaned. Pallets, wooden crates, and other military equipment must be free from soil, manure, and debris. Military equipment used in animal disease eradication, such as Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD), efforts will NOT be allowed re-entry into the United States.

A. Inspection and Cleaning Requirements - Equipment/Vehicles (see TIM 31)\*  
Facility/location-must have adequate lighting and ventilation for cleaning and inspections.

##### 1. Surface

For Performing Preclearance Activities - Identify/Designate a Cleaning Location--must have a hard surface that, even if wet, will not allow soil contamination of clean vehicles. The washing, staging, and loading areas are connected in such a way to prevent soil from adhering to tires, undercarriage, or any accessory of vehicle/rolling stock or container. The use of a drain in close proximity could prevent soil contamination of clean equipment. Hardstand area required to carry out cleaning of equipment/vehicles will depend on amount of pieces to be cleaned, personnel available to carry out cleaning, staging, and loading schedule.

For Performing Cleaning Upon Arrival (at APHIS Identified Cleaning Location)--**All cleaning should occur prior to shipment to the United States.** However, if cleaning is required upon arrival, the facilities must include a hardstand surface that, even if wet, will not allow soil contamination of clean vehicles. All water must drain directly into an approved sewer system in the immediate area. Hardstand area must decline toward the drain and be enclosed by a structure (temporary or permanent walls) which allows for containment of the soil being removed. The hardstand areas for washing, staging and loading are to be connected to prevent contamination of clean tires, undercarriages, or any accessory of vehicle/rolling stock or container. The PPQ Port Director at the port-of-entry will determine if the designated cleaning facilities are appropriate for cleaning of vehicles/equipment. The decision must take into consideration the scale of deployment (number of pieces), area available, etc.

\*TIM 31 is a military document entitled: Contingency Retrograde Washdowns: Cleaning and Inspection Procedures. Available from the Armed Forces Pest Management Board.

##### 2. Water

Wash racks or other hoist equipment (e.g., forklift, tow, etc.) must be available to ensure cleaning procedures in hard to reach areas, such as undercarriage, can be performed. Safety precautions should be observed when using means to sustain heavy pieces of equipment, such as mil-vans, to prevent any accidents. Extraordinary measures **MUST** be taken to carry out cleaning of track vehicles (i.e., tanks) to prevent soil contamination

in hard to reach areas. This may include, but is not limited to, removal of Abhrams Engine pack.

Acceptable cleaning includes:

- High pressure cleaning,
- Steam cleaning, OR
- Combination of the two methods

### 3. Equipment

Large quantities of water and adequate water pressure (a minimum of 200 psi) are required. Personal protection equipment should also be available.

## **V. Military Aircraft and Vessels**

Military must provide advance notification for arrivals at the port-of-entry. Cargo and passenger areas must be free from soil. Garbage from aircraft and vessels must be kept in tight leak proof containers. Garbage removal must be under USDA compliance agreement or direct PPQ supervision.

## **VI. Military Personnel**

Military personnel will be cleared in the United States upon arrival through the Federal Inspection Services. All personnel must declare agricultural items such as fruits, vegetables, meat or dairy products, plants, and soil and must declare whether or not they have been on a farm. Agricultural items found may be inspected and/or seized. Regulatory and quarantine action will depend on quarantine items found and facilities available for proper disposition. Footwear must be thoroughly cleaned and free of any dirt, manure, or particulate matter before entering the United States. It is recommended that dirty clothes be laundered before shipping or, if not possible, placed into tight plastic bags for immediate laundering when feasible.

Privately owned vehicles (POV) must be free from dirt, soil, and particulate matter, inside and outside. Cleaning must be performed prior to shipping to the United States. If POV is found contaminated with soil, cleaning will be done at approved facilities at the port of arrival. Household goods, personal effects, and outdoor equipment/items such as garden tools, bicycles, etc., should be carefully examined and cleaned prior to packing and shipping.

No restricted or prohibited agricultural items should be sent by mail. Check with the APO and FPO personnel about mailing restrictions.

## **VII. Special Military Operations**

Any large-scale movement of military personnel and equipment to the United States requires prior written notification and approval by USDA-APHIS. The following are guidelines for determining a large-scale movement:

- 500 troops or more in 24 hours without equipment
- 100 troops or more with equipment
- Any tracked vehicle

The above guidelines are subject to modification on a case-by-case basis.

Notification must include number of involved personnel, name and telephone number of point of contact, equipment (types and numbers), dates, and ports of arrival and locations of exercises. Notification must be given to APHIS-PPQ personnel as follows:

-Movements arriving into military bases must contact USDA at the port-of-entry at least 30 days in advance, when possible.

-Movements not arriving into a military base must contact the PPQ State Plant Health Director and APHIS headquarters at least 30 days in advance.

The U.S. military will notify PPQ at the port of entry if any military equipment went through preclearance and are documented as such. Failure to have approved facilities upon arrival will result in refusing entry of equipment found contaminated with soil/manure/particulate matter.

## **VIII. USDA-APHIS Contacts -- Headquarters**

Preclearance Requests:

David Reeves (e-mail [David.Reeves@usda.gov](mailto:David.Reeves@usda.gov))

Evelia Sosa (e-mail [Evelia.Sosa@usda.gov](mailto:Evelia.Sosa@usda.gov))

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U.S. Port Clearance Questions and Clarifications

Candace Funk (e-mail [Candace.G.Funk@usda.gov](mailto:Candace.G.Funk@usda.gov))

## USDA-APHIS Headquarters Address and Telephone Information:

USDA-APHIS-PPQ  
4700 River Road Unit 60  
Riverdale, Maryland 20737  
Telephone number: (301) 734-8295  
Fax No.: (301) 734-8318

### **IX. USDA-APHIS Contacts -- PPQ State Plant Health Directors**

To find the contact information for the PPQ State Plant Health Director in the State, go to the APHIS website and select Plant Health in the first column. You will be taken to the website for PPQ. Select Directories and the heading for State Plant Health Directors. A map of the United States will appear. Put your cursor on the State in question and the information will appear on the screen.

APHIS website: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>

PPQ website: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/>

State Plant Health Directors map: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/travel/aqi.html>

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